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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews recent research concerning the relationship between teachers' theoretical orientation about reading and their reading instructional practices. The paper first describes three major clusters of theoretical reading instructional approaches: phonics orientation, skills orientation, and whole language orientation. It then reviews research that indicates that theoretical orientation is the dominant factor in determining how teachers act during reading instruction, and research that indicates a more complex relationship regarding the connection between theory and practice in the teaching and learning of reading. The paper concludes that studies of theory-practice relationships in the teaching of reading have produced inconclusive findings: although some studies have found that teachers adhere to their theoretical model during reading instruction, other studies have found that teachers' theoretical orientations were reflected in practice, but only after being modified by higher priority concerns. Thirty-nine references are attached. (RS)

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Match or mismatch:

The relationship between teachers' beliefs about reading and their reading instructional practices

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In recent years, the relationship between teachers' thinking and beliefs and instructional practice is attracting increasing attention. Research on teacher thinking assumes that: "1) practice is greatly influenced by teacher thinking; 2) teaching is guided by thoughts and judgments; 3) teaching is a high-level decision-making process." (Isenberg, 1990, p.322). These assumptions portray teachers as active, engaging and rational professionals who make both conscious and intuitive decisions in school context. It is also suggested that the thinking of teachers constitutes a large part of the psychological context of teaching and that practice is "substantially influenced and even determined by teachers' underlying thinking" (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p.255).

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Recent research on reading instructional methods also suggests that the most important variable in instructional effectiveness is the teacher rather than the method or material (Duffy, 1977). For instance, after an attempt to discover the best approach to initial reading instruction Bond and Dykstra (1967) state,

> ...no one approach is so distinctively better in all situations and respects than the others that it should be considered the one best method and the one to be used exclusively. ... To improve reading instruction, it is necessary to train better teachers of reading rather than to expect a panacea in the form of materials. (p. 11)

Based on their extensive work with reading teachers, Harste and Burke (1977) proposed that " it is the teacher who makes the difference" and hypothesized that "the key component of the teacher variable is the teacher's theoretical orientation" (p.34). They operationally defined teacher's theoretical orientation as "a particular knowledge and belief system about reading which strongly influences critical decision-making related to both the teaching and learning of reading" (p.34). According to Harste and Burke (1977), both teachers and learners hold particular and identifiable theoretical orientations about reading and those orientations significantly effect experiences, goals, behavior, and outcomes.

Weaver (1988) further suggests:

> Children's success at reading reflects their reading strategies; their reading strategies typically reflect their implicit definitions of reading; children's definitions of reading often reflect the instructional approach; and the instructional approach reflects a definition of reading, whether implicit or explicit. (p.2)

Although many people have proposed or supposed the relationship between what teachers believe and what they actually do in classrooms, but empirical investigation of it has been limited and is comparatively new (Pace & Powers, 1981). Only in recent years, some reading researchers have empirically examined the relationship betweent teachers' theoretical orientation of reading and their classroom practice (Bawden, 1979; Bawden & Duffy, 1979; DeFord, 1979; Duffy, 1979, 1981; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Gove, 1981; Harste & Burke, 1977; Hoffman & Kugle, 1981; Lehman, Allen & Freeman, 1990; Levande, 1989; Rupley & Logan, 1984; Watson, 1984). These studies have produced opposing and inconclusive results. Some studies (DeFord, 1979; Gove, 1981; Harste & Burke, 1977; Lehman et al, 1990; Rupley & Logan, 1984; Watson, 1984) showed a strong and direct relationship between what teacher believe and what they actually do. Other studies (Bawden,

1979; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Hoffman & Kugle, 1981; Allen & Freeman, 1990; Levande, 1989) found factors other than theoretical orientation to be of paramount importance in determining how teachers teach reading. The relationships among the factors that influence the manner in which teachers teach reading have not been clearly eastablished. As Pace and Powers suggest (1981), "...the complex relationships among teachers' beliefs in many areas and their instructional decisions deserve further and more extensive study." (p.108)

For teacher educators interested in changing classroom practices to reflect current reseach and knowledge in learning generally and reading in particular, it is important to understand the factors that influence classroom teachers in their selection of instructional strategies and materials. If teachers teach reading in the way consistent with what they believe about reading and reading instruction, then it may be possible for teacher educators to affect change by influencing teachers' theoretical orientation during preservice professional training and inservice staff development. Efforts could focus on changing teachers' theoretical orientation to be more consonant with current knowledge and recent research on the

teaching and learning of reading. On the other hand, if factors more than theoretical orientation influence instruction, then it may not be sufficient to just change teachers' theoretical orientation, and it should become necessary to identify, understand and consider those additional variables before any real change in teaching practice can happen. The purpose of this paper is to review recent research concerning the relationship between teachers' theoretical orientation about reading and their reading instructional practices.

Theoretical Orientations of Reading

Harste and Burke (1977) believe that "both the teaching and the learning of reading are theoretically based" (p.32). Both teachers and students behave according to stable and consistent assumptions about the nature of the reading process and its acquisition. Over the years of reading research, many theories and models about reading and reading instruction have been developed. Harste and Burke identified three models representing theoretical orientations as they pertain to beginning reading instruction which they labelled phonics, skills, and whole language. These three orientations differ on the dimension of the size of the language unit seen as critical in reading

and learning to read. According to Harste and Burke (1977), in the phonics orientation letter-sound relationships are critical in the instructional program. A skills orientation views words as critical units and focuses attention upon word recognition and identification techniques. A whole language orientation entails seeing sentences, paragraphs, and discourses as critical units and focuses attention on intrasentence and intersentence syntax and semantics.

As DeFord (1978) has pointed out, these orientations also differ on another important dimension. DeFord described the phonics and skills orientation as arising from a mechanistic theory model wherein phenomena to be understood are seen as analogous to machines, with each part having a fixed, unalterable function and the whole being the sum of its parts. In such a model, understanding a phenomena would be possible through separate examination of the several parts. Phonics and skills orientations reflect this model through a pedogogical focus upon separate and somewhat isolated examination of "parts" of written language - letters and words. On the other hand, a whole language orientation arises from an organismic theory model wherein phenomena are viewed as analogous to organism. An understanding of phenomena from this perspective involves the

notion that parts have alterable functions and are interactive and interdependent in maintaining the function of the whole. A whole language orientation reflects this model through a pedogogical focus upon the interactive and interdependent nature of cue systems in written language. Such a focus is most commonly manifested by keeping the reader involved with whole, non-fractionated text and avoiding treatment of aspects of features of written language in isolation.

Phonics Orientation. In this theoretical orientation reading is perceived as an offshoot of oral language in which the reader must learn to manipulate the relationships between the symbols of speech (sounds) and the graphic symbols that represent them (letters). Neither syntax nor semantics are viewed as primary factors in the reading process. Meaning is reached first through the sound-letter system (Cohen, 1977). From Pestalozzi to Rudolf Flesch, many educators have believed that meaning is derived from the recognition of certain letter combinations (Stauffer, 1969).

According to this view, reading is simply speech coded by letters. Since the key to reading is learning how to break the code, learners are taught to recognize the relationship between a speech

sound and its written form. Reading instruction emphasizes phonics rules governing these relationships. Learners are initially taught the forms and names of letters. Next, learners are taught to associate the letters with the corresponding sounds that the letters represent. This is followed by instruction in blending known letters into words. Content is limited to words cosisting of letters that have previously been introduced. A few necessary function words are taught by sight.

Teachers with a phonics orientation view reading as either synthesis or analysis of words, without much regard for meaning. They tend to believe that reading is, first of all, and essentially, the mechanical skill of decoding, of turning the printed symbols into sounds (oral symbols) which are language (Harste & Burke, 1977), and such decoding skills should be taught in a systematic, sequential manner.

Skills Orientation. In this orientation, reading is treated as one of the four language arts which is taught separately from the others. Reading is viewed somewhat as a set of broad components consisting equally, in their treatment, of vocabulary, decoding, grammar, and comprehension. The main component of reading according to this

model is the rapid and accurate decoding of words (Ekwall and Shanker, 1989). Reading skills are seen as distinct units that can be taught in isolation. Fluent reading occurs when the learner has mastered a sufficient number of skills. From this model major skill areas are extracted for direct instruction. Skills advocates believe the key to reading success is word identification from which comprehension follows. Emphasis is placed on the reader first identifying each printed word and then relating the words to a meaningful context which is affected by the reader's prior knowledge, interests, etc.. Most basal reading programs are designed around this orientation. This model supports direct teacher-led instruction. Proponents believe that children can be trained to read well (Stauffer, 1969). Lessons include instruction in sight vocabulary, the teaching of word recognition "skills" and the teaching of comprehension "skills".

Typically the lesson plan format in the basal reader program directs the teachers to first introduce the "new" words prior to reading the story. Then they are directed to allow the children to read silently, followed by oral re-reading. Finally, a series of questions are provided to guide and judge the children's

comprehension. Lessons typically conclude by having the children complete workbook pages and skills sheets independently (Betts, 1946; Stauffer, 1969). Product, not process, is the major concern of those who subscribe to an objective based, skills orientation. That is, the emphasis is on pronouncing words right, answering comprehension questions correctly, filling out work sheets accurately, and so on.

Whole Language Orientation. In contrast to the skills orientation where advocates view reading as separate from listening, speaking and writing, proponents of the whole language orientation view reading as "one of four ways in which the abstract concept of language is realized" (Harste & Burke, 1977, p.37). In a whole language orientation, the systems of language -- grapho-phonic, syntactic and semantic, are not only shared but are interdependent and interactive aspects of the reading process. Meaning is the core "enwrapped in a syntactic structure and sheathed with a phoneme-grapheme system" (Harste & Burke, 1977, p.37).

In contrast to phonics and skills orientations derived from behaviorist theory, whole language is based on a cognitive view of learning, that learning goes from whole to part, "from general to

specific, from familiar to unfamilar, from vague to precise, from gross to fine, from highly contextualized to more abstract" (Goodman & Goodman, 1981, p.5). That is the way the human brain is built to learn. In a whole language orientation, literacy is regarded as a natural extention of human language development.

Unlike the skills orientation, there is no formula for whole language (Rich, 1985). Reading and writing are authentic. Workbooks, basal readers, grammar or spelling exercises are not used. Children read trade books and newspapers, environmental print, use reference materials not necessarily written for school use, write stories for publication, receive spelling and punctuation instruction as it is appropriate to the piece of writing they are working on, and produce a variety of other kinds of writing (Edelsky and Smith, 1984). Opportunities for children to interact and collaborate are abundant. Talk is important. Children's literature is present and classroom libraries and reading corners are widely used by the children. Children learn to read by reading and to write by writing (Newman, 1985), with skills development taught in the context of authentic use.

Teachers possessing a whole language orientation believe that the learner is central and that the child is intrinsically motivated to make sense of the world. They believe the responsibility for teaching children to read and write should rest with people instead of programs, with teachers instead of technology (Smith, 1981). They believe that as children use language they learn language and they use language to learn. Cochrane, et.al. (1984) sum up the whole language position:

> One of the most unenlightened things the teaching profession ever did was to set aside materials, books, and reading periods for the sole purpose of 'teaching' reading. Reading cannot be taught, it can only be learned. (p.15)

Whole language is more than a method of teaching reading. Whole language is "an attitude of mind which provides a shape for the classroom" (Rich, 1985, p.719). Teachers possessing whole language orientation are concerned with helping children make sense of the world. They view reading as a process of constructing meaning for themselves based on their need to develop a "theory of the world" (Smith, 1978). Reading is seen as more than accurately reproducing words. The purpose for reading is comprehension. It is not possible to decode from a surface structure that carries no

meaning in order to get to comprehension. "Instead, some comprehension of the whole is required before one can say how individual words should sound, or deduce their meaning in particular utterances ...." (Smith, 1978, p.75). Children read in order to make sense of print and as a consequence learn to read. They learn to read by really reading (Smith, 1978).

Children are surrounded by written language in the world outside the classroom, and they want to make sense of it. As with oral language, they focus on meaning. For children to learn the written language, it too must be natural and not fragmented or reduced and controlled. Therefore, experiences with written language must be authentic. Lastly, reading must not be separate from other learning. Instead, reading is a fundamental tool for gaining knowledge, a way of vicariously experiencing the lives of others, a means of questioning the views of others (Goodman & Goodman, 1981). The goal of whole language is to help children become independent, life long learners ... curious, knowledgeable, and competent (Edelsky, Draper & Smith, 1983).

In summary, theoretical orientations as they pertain to reading involve beliefs about three major clusters of reading instructional

approaches. Each of these theoretical orientations is founded on very different views of the reading process and the teaching-learning process. Phonics methods place heavy emphasis on letter-sound relationships and students are taught to "sound out" words. Skills methods identify, sequence, and provide instruction in separate reading subskills. In contrast, whole language methods emphasize the intergration of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students are provided with diverse reading experiences and instruction using predictable, simplified literature.

Relationship between Theoretical Orientations and Practices

Teachers-in-training are exposed to many theories about teaching and instruction in their professional preparation, presumably because such theories are expected to influence their later instructional practice. Whether they actually do is still very much in doubt (Pace & Powers, 1981). Perhaps largely for methodological reasons, the contention that teachers use their own beliefs and theories about teaching to guide their classroom decisions (Harste & Burke, 1977; Kamil & Pearson, 1979) has been difficult to demonstrate empirically. Until the last few years, attempts to study the relation between teachers' beliefs and classroom practice have

typically used self-report measures (Pace & Powers, 1981). More recently, investigators have used ethnographic methods to explore the relationship between belief and practice in depth. However, studies of theory-practice relationships and the teaching of reading have produced mixed and often opposing findings regarding the extent and the manner in which classroom practice is influenced by theoretical orientation.

Belief-Action Match

Kamil and Pearson (1979) contended that, "every teacher operates with at least an implicit model of reading... and to discover what model it is, we need only to observe him teach for a period of time." (p.10). Kamil and Pearson however, did not test this contention, instead they reviewed three models of the reading process (top-down, bottom-up, and interactive) and suggested what instructional behaviors exemplars of the three models might employ. Harste and Burke (1977) developed a research paradigm to explore the hypothesis that both the teaching and learning of reading are theoretically based. Their paradigm was used to study the decisions made by teachers and pupils relative to:

1. Goals selected and weighing of goals
2. Information selected for diagnosis and the weighing of such information
3. Diagnostic procedures to be used
4. Diagnostic materials to be used
5. Learning procedures to be used
6. Learning materials to be used
7. Environmental arrangements to be used
8. Reading criterion to be used (p.39)

Harste and Burke concluded after a long series of classroom visits that theoretical orientation could be determined by analyzing teacher and student behavior in the areas identified by their paradigm.

Specifically, they found that teacher response repetoires to children who encountered unfamiliar words clearly expressed that teacher's theoretical orientation. Teachers who represented a phonics approach responded consistently with "Sound it out," or "What other word do you know that begins with that letter?" Teachers holding a whole language orientation either prompted "What do you think that word might be from the rest of the sentence?" or offered no help presumbably to gain information as to what strategies the child had for decoding unfamiliar words encountered in print.

Harste and Burke found that teachers offered prompts exemplifying a single theoretical orientation and consistently

behaved in a manner consistent with that orientation. They concluded:

> What has become both readily apparent and surprising persistent concerning the relationship between reading instruction and the reading process is that: (1) despite atheoretical statements, teachers are theoretical in their instructional approach to reading, and (2) despite lack of knowledge about reading theory...students are theoretical in the way in which they approach learning to read. Both students and teachers exhibit behavior wich is sufficiently systematic to allow inferences about a theory which must underly that behavior. (p.32)

It is difficult to judge the significance of Harste and Burke's study because the methodology is not described in great detail. The findings of this study did, however, generate a large amount of further research on this topic.

Based on Harste and Burke's conclusion, Stansell and Robeck (1979) conducted a study concerning the development of theoretical orientation in undergraduate reading students. Three hundred students completed the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) at various times during their preservice professional preparation. Data from the completed TORPs revealed that:

1. Before taking any reading courses, students had a phonics orientation.

2. Introductory core coureses on reading moved students from a phonics to a skills orientation.

3. A language and reading course moved students toward a whole language orientation.

4. Orientation of students completing their professional preparation remained within the range for a skills orientation unless they had taken the reading and language course in which case their scores shifted toward a whole language approach.

Stansfell and Robeck's data demonstrated the impact of preservice professional preparation on the development of theoretical orientation in students of education. Students who have been exposed to the findings of relevant research in the teaching and learning of reading during their course work are more likely to develop a theoretical orientation reflecting that research.

Watson (1984) observed and described two reading instructional procedures stemming from two different theoretical orientations. Three major assumptions underlie this study: "1. Teachers have a theoretical base on which they build their reading program; 2. researchers can find out what that base is; and 3.

teachers' beliefs will be evident in their teaching practices." (p. 2)

Two teachers, one skills and one whole language oriented, were selected on the basis of peer and administor recommendation for extended observation. The teachers stated instructional orientation was confirmed by administration of the TORP. Data were collected from video tapes and their transcriptions and from teacher journals. The results were analyzed using these questions as guides:

> 1. On what unit of language was the teacher focusing the children's attention?
> 2. On what linguistic system was the teacher focusing the child's attention?
> 3. What aspects of the reading process were emphasized?
> 4. Was the reading instruction contigent on the student, the teacher or the material? and,
> 5. Waht attitude (stance) toward reading specific text did the teacher encorage? (p.6)

Findings showed that in every category of observable data the teachers adhered closely to their theoretical model.

The extent to which theoretical models influence practice was examined by Putnam (1983). In conjunction with a research associate Putnam observed 169 hours of classroom interactions in six inner-city kindergartens. Three of the kindergarten teachers used an approach consistent with a bottom-up view of reading and three

of the teachers used an approach consistent with a top-down view of reading.

Putnam found that teachers in the kindergartens with a bottom-up theoretical orientation believed that prior to attempting any real reading, students needed to develop a set of readiness skills that would allow them to deal successfully with beginning reading instruction in first grade. Consequently, lessons focused on subskills such as auditory and visual discrimination, letter-naming, and sound-symbol correspondences. Most of the lessons observed followed a teacher-question-student-answer formate in which the teacher retained tight control. The children were supposed to sit quietly , pay attention, follow directions and talk only when recognized after raising their hands.

Teachers in the kindergartens with a top-down theoretical orientation emphasized the creation of a literate environment in which students listened to books being read aloud and then reacted to the books with discussions, art projects and drama. Students were instructed to "get a book and read" or "get paper andf write" during a "collaborative reading and writing time" that lasted from 30 to 45 minutes a day. Ten minutes a day was devoted to direct instruction

in soundsymbol correspondences. Children were continually encouraged to work together, talk, ask questions and make choices.

Putnam concluded that orientation shapes practice not only in instruction, but in classroom management as well. Bottom-up oriented teachers who believed in teaching students specifically sequenced skills used quiz-like instructional activities in which children answered questions posed by teachers and completed exercises in workbooks. Teachers operating from a top-down orientation used instructional activities according children a greater degree of control, choice and responsibility in their learning.

Gove (1981) examined the extent to which bottom-up and top-down conceptual frameworks of reading were held by primary grade teachers and explored how teachers' implicit theories of reading influence their instructional decision-making. Sixty-six first, second, and third grade teachers from Northeastern Ohio were given the TORP in order to identify teachers with a particular instructional emphasis. Twenty teachers, identified from the TORP were given the Conceptual Framework of Reading Interview, an instrument devised to elicit specific beliefs whithin an orientation. Four teachers, two of each Conceptual Framework, were then videotaped instructing one or

two average readers in a direct reading procedure involving oral reading.

Analysises of interview responses and videotaped instructional sessions revealed that teachers with a strong bottom-up belief system tended to emphasize lower order units instructionally and to believe that students learn to read by learning decoding skills. Those with moderate bottom-up beliefs emphasized sounds, letters and words instructionally. Moderate top-down teachers also believed that students learn to read by learning decoding skills. Those holding both a moderate and strong top-down position believed that students learn to read by reading meaningful material. Those holding a strong top-down position emphasized higher order units instructionally. Gove concluded that teachers do hold identifiable theoretical orientations about the learning to read process and often behave in ways which reflect these orientations.

Mitchell (1980) investigated the relation between patterns of teacher-student interactions in remedial reading settings and the teachers' theoretical positions. Six expert teachers representing either Kenneth Goodman's or Caleb Gattegno's theoretical framework were videotaped while working with one remedial reader aged eight

or nine. Interactions were analyzed using the Analytical System of Student-Teacher Interactions in Reading (ASSTIR) and the results indicated that the teachers in the two groups differed in the way they responded to student errors and that the differences were related to theoretical orientation. Data from teacher interviews indicated that teachers' behaviors were clearly affected by the ways each framework defines reading, views the the teaching-learning process, defines student independence, and interprets oral reading error.

Rupley and Logan (1984) studied the relationship between teachers' knowledge of basic reading content, beliefs about reading and the relative importance of specified learning outcomes in reading. The Knowledge Test of Reading for Elementary Teachers was administered to 100 elementary teachers to measure their knowledge of basic reading content. The same 100 teachers completed the Propositions About Reading Instruction Inventory to assess their beliefs about how reading should be taught. An instrument developed by Rupley and Logan required the participants in the study to rank specific reading outcomes in the order of the outcomes relative importance.

Results showed that the best predictor of teachers' identification of important learning outcomes in reading was knowledge of reading content. Findings also indicated that beliefs about reading influenced elementary teachers' decisions about the importance of reading outcomes typically taught in the elementary grades. Rupley and Logan also found that the relative importance of specific reading behavior outcomes differed significantly between primary and intermediate level teachers. They concluded that teachers who hold student-centered reading beliefs are not likely to value instruction that focuses on decoding.

Chambers (1989) examined relations between fourth grade teachers' knowledge and beliefs about reading comprehension and comprehension instruction. Nine fourth grade teachers were first interviewed with the Knowledge and Beliefs about Reading and Comprehension Interview (RCI), and two of these teachers were then observed during classroom reading instruction for 12 days. Based on both interview and observation data, Chambers concluded that teachers' beliefs and knowledge about reading comprehension and instruction shape their instructional decisions. However, beliefs grounded in solid knowledge of a topic appeared to be a more

influential force in instructional decision-making than beliefs based on intuitive knowledge of experience. Teachers' instructional decisions may also be influenced by other factors such as time, the reading program, administrative directives, classroom management issues, and the availability of instructional materials.

A recent study by Richardson and her collegues (Richardson, et al., 1991) also examined the relationship between teachers' beliefs about the teaching of reading comprehension and their classroom practices. Thirty-nine intermediate teachers from six elementary schools in two southwestern school districts voluntarily participated in the study. The participating teachers were interviewed with two sets of questions to elicit their declared or public beliefs about reading comprehension and how children learn to read in general, and their more private beliefs or beliefs in action. On the base of the interview data, a majority of the teachers were categorized in a skills/word approach in which it is believed that the subskills of reading must be learned before the meaning of the text can be determined, and the purpose of reading is to determine what the author meant.

Predictions about teaching practices were made from their belief interviews of the 39 teachers and were then related to the practices observed in their classrooms. The teachers were observed twice at a time they said they were teaching reading comprehension. Comparisons between predtions from interviews and observed behaviors in classrooms revealed that the percentage of agreement ranged from 66% to 92%. The study concluded that the beliefs of teachers relate to their classroom practices in the teaching of reading comprehension. They also explored a situation in which the teachers's beliefs did not match her practices. The case suggests that the teacher was in the process of changing beliefs and practices, but that the changes in beliefs were preceding changes in practices.

Lehman, Allen & Freeman (1990) investigated the congruence between teacher perceptions and teacher practice regarding literature-based reading instruction. One hundred and ninety-two elementary teachers completed two-part questionnaires designed to assess and identify teacher perceptions of classroom practices in literature-based reading instruction. Using the respondents' beliefs as predictors, the canonical discriminant analyses indicated that the measured teacher beliefs about reading could predict the practices.

The results revealed that teachers' perceptions significantly predicted: a) how much time students read a book of their choice in class; b) the role of the basal reader in the classroom; c) the primary resource used by teachers in planning the literature program; d) the types of materials used in instruction; e) how book extensions are selected; and f) whether conferences are used as an assessment technique. The investigators concluded that teacher beliefs correlate with classroom practices as reported by these teachers and thus there is a congruence between teacher perceptions and teacher practice regarding literature-based reading instruction.

In summary, the studies reviewed to this point reflect findings which indicate that theoretical orientation is the dominant factor in determining how teachers act during reading instruction. The implication of these findings is evident. If theoretical orientation is crucial to instructional behavior and if theoretical orientation can be influenced during professional preparation or staff development, teacher educators and staff developers can affect classroom practice by inducing the development of theoretical orientations reflective of current and pertinent research in the field.

Belief-Action Mismatch

The studies that follow have produced results that indicate a more complex relationship exists regarding the connection between theory and practice in the teaching and learning of reading. The implication of these findings is also clear. If the nature of the relationship is truly more complex, then teacher educators and staff developers need to understand all the factors in the theory-practice equation in order to intervene in ways that will affect classroom instructional practices. Merely acting to change theoretical orientation will not be sufficient.

Martonicik (1981) conducted six case studies of primary teachers to determine factors influencing teacher instructional decisions during reading lessons. The study examined two research questions: 1) Is there a relationship between teachers' theoretical orientation to reading, teacher verbal cues, and specified internal and external variables in the teachers' background? 2) Is there a relationship between teachers' theoretical orientations to reading and teachers' actual classroom verbal cueing behavior? Two teachers from each theoretical orientation of phonics, skills, and whole language were matched on age and years of experience. Each teacher

was observed and taped during reading instruction for four days. Each teacher was then interviewed to ask the teachers' rationale for specific taped behaviors and instructional practices. The teachers' taped verbal cues were categorized according to the Harste and Burke (1977) definitions of the three theoretical orientations.

Results suggested that external variables such as teacher situation and teacher preparation seemed more influential than internal variables such as individual attitudes and knowledge of reading on teachers' reading instruction. Observation and interview data indicated that the type of basal and supplementary materials used, the principal's expectations, and student numbers and abilities may determine teachers' instructional strategies and type of verbal cues. Martonicik thus concluded that the teachers' use of verbal cues do not reflect their theoretical orientations.

Hoffman and Kugle (1981) examined the relationship between teachers theoretical orientation to reading and the verbal feedback they offered to students during guided oral reading. The subjects for the study were 35 experienced second and third grade teachers. Samples of teachers verbal feedback were taken from video taped and audiotaped group oral reading sessions recorded in actual

classroom settings. The reading groups were composed of four to eight students with a broad range of ability levels represented. The video and audio tapes were coded using the FORMAS system, an instrument devloped by Hoffman to "represent the salient characteristics of teacher verbal feedback to student miscues" (p.4). Follow-up interviews were conducted with a subsample of teachers to further explore relationships between orientation and behavior. After the tapes were coded, the participating teachers were individually administered the TORP and the PRI in order to assess theoretical orientation.

It was hypothesized that during oral reading instruction, teachers with a whole language orientation should:

> 1. ignore more student miscues which result in little meaning change than teachers who have a skills or phonics orientation;
> 2. wait longer to respond to miscues which change meaning than teachers who have a skills or phonics orientation, thus providing the student with an opportunity to self-correct his/her own miscues;
> 3. respond to student miscues with contextual clues as opposed to focusing student attention on the grapho-phonic level of the text word. (p.3)

Findings indicated that the only teacher feedback variable significantly associated with theoretical orientation was the tendency

to wait to give feedback to miscues with high meaning change. The results also brought into question the notion that teacher beliefs can be assessed through a pencil and paper task. Teachers' responses to interview questions suggested that their beliefs were situational and related in complex ways to the context of instruction.

Cavuto (1982) also explored the relationship between the kind of feedback teachers gave to students who miscued during group oral reading instruction and the teachers' theoretical orientations to reading. Thirty second grade teachers were individually administered the TORP after one episode of group oral reading instruction had been audiotaped. The teacher-student interactions from the audiotapes were coded using the FORMAS system developed by Hoffman (1981). Results revealed that: 1) the number of graphophonic prompts the teachers gave their students during group oral reading instruction was significantly greater ($p<.05$) than the number of semantic/syntactic prompts; 2) the teachers were consistent ($p<.05$) in the types of prompts they gave their students; 3) there was no statistically significant relationship ($p>.05$) between teacher prompts and teacher theoretical orientation. Twenty-two of the teachers appeared to be skills oriented, eight phonics oriented,

and none appeared to be whole language oriented; 4) teacher training and teacher theoretical orientation did not have a statisitically significant effect ($p>.05$) on the kinds of prompts teachers gave their students.

Levande (1989) investigated the extent to which teachers behave in ways consistent with their self-repoted belief systems concerning the teaching of reading. A sample of 79 primary teachers in five public elementary schools were administered the TORP to identify their theoretical orientations about reading instruction. A stratified sample of 15 teachers from the 48 respondents was then randomly selected for observations and interviews. Levande found just over half (53%) of the teachers taught in a manner inconsistent with their theoretical orientation. The major reason as teacher interviews revealed was teachers' efforts to comply with administrative policies regarding reading instruction. Additionally, skills teachers reported that their classroom experiences had the greatest influence on their beliefs about reading. Whole language teachers cited their district's recent professional development program as having the strongest influence on their beliefs about reading and their instructional practices concerning reading.

A recent study conducted by Mitchell (1990) investigated the consistency between Chapter I reading teachers' theoretical orientations and instructional practices related to preactive planning and interactive decision-making. Twenty-three Chapter I teachers were administered instruments focusing on teachers' theoretical orientations about reading and instructional choices. Four of these teachers were then observed during 10 separate instructional sessions. During the observations, field notes were taken, lessons were audiotaped, and relevant learning materials were collected. At the conclusion of each observation, a brief interview was conducted with each teacher about the day's lesson.

All data qualitatively analyzed using concurrent flows of analysis indicated that: 1) Teacher A's beliefs were consistent with his stated planning; however, his decision-making was not; 2) Teacher B's planning and decision-making did not match her beliefs about reading; 3) Teacher C's beliefs were inconsistent with her planning, but consistent with her decision-making; and 4) Teacher D's beliefs were consistent with her planning and decision-making, except when she had to abandon her favored instructional practices to prepare her students for state-mandated tests. Mitchell concluded

that although teachers may share similar beliefs about reading, there is great variation in their instructional practices related to preactive planning and interactive decision-making.

To date, the most extensive investigations of teacher beliefs about reading and their relationship to practice have been those conducted as part of the conceptions of reading project at the Institute for Research on Teaching of Michigan State University (Bawden, 1979; Duffy, 1977; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Duffy & Ball, 1986). To assess teachers' conceptions of reading, this project has used two methods: a "Propositional Inventory," designed to provide exploratory information about whether teachers think about reading in conceptual terms, and a naturalistic field study of 23 classrooms carried to see whether, if teachers have consistent views about reading, these are reflected in practice or guide teachers' classroom decisions. In a large scale survey of 857 teachers, they found, using the Propositional Inventory, that teachers do have conceptions of reading, but that these do not match the theoretical categories commonly found in the reading literature, which Bawden and Duffy (1979) labeled "content-centered" and "pupil-centered."

Two kinds of data were collected for each of the 23 teachers in

the field study, with three sources being used for each kind of data (Duffy & Anderson, 1982). Data on teachers' conceptions of reading were obtained from formal interviews, informal interviews, and from comments teachers made to pupils during classroom instruction. These statements were then classified into categories. If any one category contained five or more statements from a teacher, it was considered to be part of that teacher's conception. Determination of a teacher's classroom instructional practices was made on the basis of observational field notes, audiotaped lessons of reading groups, and pupil activity during reading lessons. The two sets of data were then compared to determine whether the teachers' observed instructional practices in reading and/or the time employed in various reading activities reflected the teachers' categories. If at least five activities were observed which reflected a particular conception and/or the time spent in reading activities reflected a category, the instructional practices were considered to be guided and governed by the teacher's stated conception (Duffy & Anderson, 1982).

The results of the study showed that teachers did have identifiable conceptions of reading, but their statements conveyed multiple ideas about reading rather than single theoretical

perspectives. In addition, teachers held many non-reading conceptions about such things as classroom management or the appropriateness of instruction for students of different ability levels. In many instructional situations, teachers' decisions appeared to be influenced more by such non-reading factors than by their ideas about reading. Duffy and Anderson (1982) report that teachers claim to change their teaching behaviors according to the perceived needs of students of different grade or ability levels, and when reading and non-reading principles conflict, "the teacher tends to be guided more by the non-reading than by the reading conception."

Duffy and Ball (1986) in reviewing the findings of the Conceptions of Reading Project wrote,

> ... the teachers focused on maintaining a smooth activity flow, on following the sequence prescribed in the basal textbook, and on providing 'structure' for the low group students. These pressures took priority in the teachers' minds, and their implicit theories came into play only after being filtered through these priorities. (p.172)

In summary, studies of theory-practice relationships in the teaching of reading have produced inconclusive findings. One group of researchers (Chambers, 1989; DeFord, 1979; Gove, 1981; Harste & Burke, 1977; Kamil & Pearson, 1979; Lehman et. al., 1990;

Mitchell, 1980; Putnam, 1983; Rupley & Logan, 1984; Stansell & Robeck, 1979; Watson, 1984) have found that teachers hold theoretical orientations and adhere to their theoretical model during reading instruction. These researchers maintain that reading instructional behavior is governed by theoretical orientation. To change behavior it is first necessary to change orientation.

Research done by the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT) at Michigan State University (Bawden, 1979; Duffy, 1977; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Duffy & Ball, 1986) and others (Cavuto, 1982; Hoffman & Kugle, 1981; Levande, 1989; Mitchell, 1990) yielded somewhat different results. The IRT found that teachers theoretical orientations were reflected in practice, but only after being modified by higher priority concerns such as administrative mandates, classroom management concerns and conformance with the prescribed instructional sequences of the materials being used. Hoffman and Kugle's (1981) suggested that theoretical orientation is situational and related to the context of instruction. From this perspective, to change instructional behavior it is necessary to do more than simply change a teacher's theoretical orientation.

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